



ERIC WHITACRE'S VIRTUAL SCHOOL

CHAPTER 2: EMOTIONAL ARCHITECTURE

Planning the Journey

Student Guide – Curiosity Edition



Introduction

This lesson will help you gain insight into Eric's approach for structuring the emotional journey that his audience will experience, and it will demonstrate how he prepares an emotional "anchor" for his own compositional process. You will explore similar ways to understand "Emotional Architecture" which may help you interpret other works of art.

Works referenced in this video:

- *Deep Field*: <https://youtu.be/yDiD8F9ItX0>

Words and ideas to help you stay curious

“Tone Cluster”

Hamilton

Emotional Architecture

The Hubble Space Telescope

Deep Field

Discussion, Discovery and Insight

Have you ever thought about how incredibly large the universe is, or is this the first time you have thought about it? What are some descriptive words that you think could begin to describe the vastness of space and the universe?

Eric says “Music is about communication. It’s about reaching out to that audience member, that listener, that performer and speaking with them on a deep, wordless, intuitive level.” What do you think he means by this, and do you agree that music can communicate in these ways? Why, or why not?

Frank R. Barnard wrote that “a picture is worth a thousand words.” In your opinion do images evoke ideas better than the written word, or do words communicate better than images? Explain your answer.

Explore Emotional Architecture

1. Brainstorm and write down words that you think begin to describe how large the universe is (or something else that when you think about fills you with curiosity, awe, and wonder). Do any of these words come close to describing the vastness of space in your opinion (if space was your topic), or do they all fall short somehow? Which words are your favorites as they connect to the idea you are exploring? Explain your thinking.
2. Choose one of the words you wrote down and create a “Mood Board.” You can do this electronically or with art supplies if you have them. You are looking for images that connect to your word in some way. If you search online, you can import the images you find into a program on your device, and if you are making a Mood Board on a piece of poster paper you can print the images, or look through printed sources like magazines and cut them out and glue them to your board. (Be sure you have permission to cut them out.) Arrange the images on your Mood Board until you really like how they look together.

3. Think of an activity or event that you love to do. It could be a physical activity, or an event you do with friends or family, or even something you do alone or in small groups like gaming or watching videos. Imagine yourself doing the activity or event and think about the range of emotions you might experience over time. As you experience that activity in your mind, your feelings and emotions will not remain the same...they will change through time. Next, let's create an Emotional Architecture Map. To do this, get a big piece of paper and something to write with, or use a drawing program on your electronic device. Create some graphic images to represent your emotional journey in your imagined event or experience, starting from the left of your page and ending on the right of your page. It does not have to look like Eric's page he created for *Deep Field* but can represent your own creative ideas and shapes.

4. Consider sharing your emotional images with someone else and see if they can get a feel for what you have created. Explain to them what your inspiration was to create the images, and explain what activity or experience is associated with the architectural forms you chose. Try to be "free from a sense of judgment" if possible.

Reflection and Insights

Did you find this exercise of the Mood Board to be easy or hard for you? Was it fun or was it challenging? Explain your answers.

Did you find this exercise of the Emotional Architecture Map to be easy or hard for you? Was it fun or was it challenging? Explain your answers.

Would you repeat this process on another topic or idea? Explain your thinking and your experience.

Has the process of being creative and exploring emotions and images inspired you to pursue anything in your life further, such as finding out more about space, or exploring some new experience? Describe your ideas or explain your final thoughts about the process and what you may have learned by doing it.

Would you change this activity to better suit your learning style and interests? If so, describe how you would change it and why the adjustments would be better for you.
